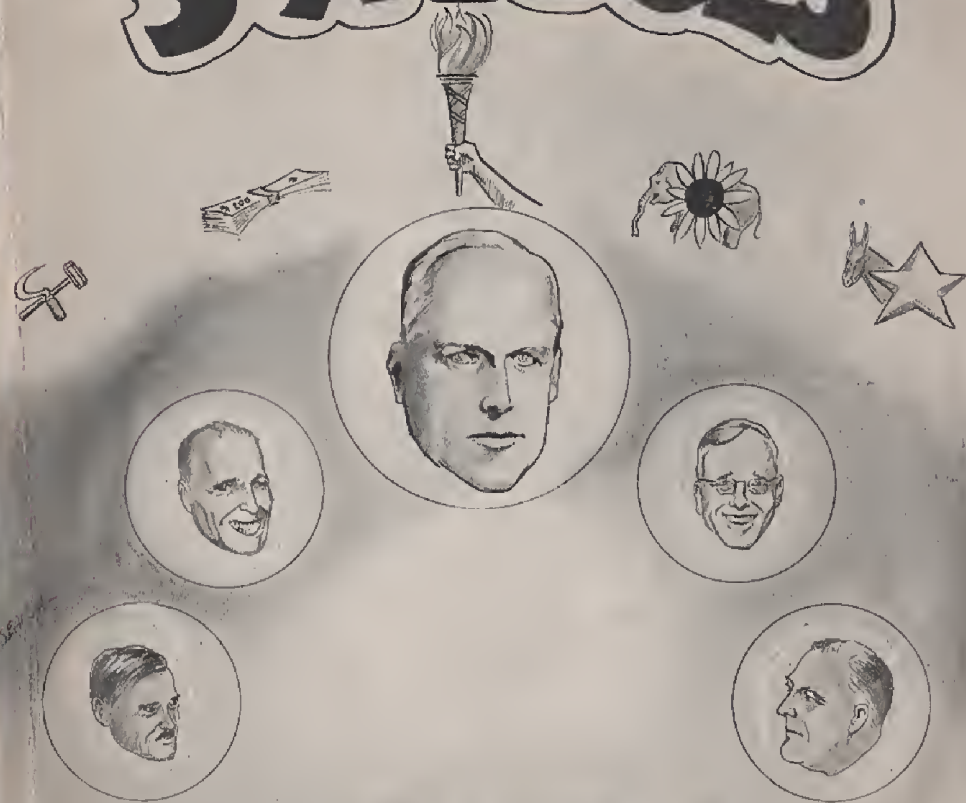


SYMBOLS



1936

PRICE FIVE CENTS

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P. 24

SYMBOLS OF 1936

ROOSEVELT LEMKE
THOMAS
BROWDER LONDON

By McALISTER COLEMAN

Here is America in 1936. Making up its mind. In forty-eight States making up its collective mind. Looking them over with shrewd, suspicious, hopeful, million-eyed appraisal, the men who have been put up there to be picked to run things for the four long, tense, teeming years that are ahead of us.

These men are named Roosevelt, Landon, Lemke, Browder, Thomas.

These are the names you will look for when you go to the polling place this November. But these names are signs: brands on advertised products, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, United States Steel, Standard Oil, Du Pont de Nemours, International Harvester Company, General Motors, Cooperative Commonwealth, Inc., signs along a State highway, right, center, left; signs of political parties, donkey, elephant, hammer and sickle, arm and torch, signs that stand for a way of living, the whole complex of thought and action, of courage and fear and the drab indifference and the restless energy of the millions back of the men whose names flare out across the stormy skies of 1936.

The name Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Charm. An engaging smile. Gallantry of a handsome Hyde Park gentleman talking urbanely into a microphone, using the well-chosen words that go straight to the liberal heart. "New Deal." "Life more abundant." "Economic royalists."

As the warm, persuasive, rich voice rolls on, planters in Arkansas move in the leather chairs of hotel lobbies and take on the sanctified expression of the town rake dressed up for Easter church-going.

Somewhere Jim Farley looks towards the radio set, droops an eye-lid, smiles contentedly, hearing the familiar words, turns to the worried little place-hunter bending eagerly towards him. "Sure, Charlie, sure, that's all arranged. You go out and get those votes and the job is yours. You know your district. You got the projects you asked for. How many did you say were on relief? What are you worried about, anyway? Get to work. We'll take care of you."

ECONOMIC ROYALISTS

Rich, warm, persuasive, the voice stills the humming of other voices in the East Side Tammany club-house. When it is done, an old-timer, gray-bristled, heavy-jowled, throws away his cigar, leans back and looks around at the younger men. "Cheez, boys, he's even better than the Professor. That's what we used to call Woodrow Wilson. I'm telling you that he has Wilson beat. I mean he gets all the high-brows with that stuff. 'Economic royalists.' Cheez, that's

a good one. Wonder what Al thinks about that one. That's piling it on to the Du Ponts and all that bunch of mugs Al is trailing with. This man Roosevelt can ladle it out."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A sign, a symbol. But of what? Millions of Americans thought (many still think) that the fine, sonorous name stood for salvation from the long and bitter onslaught of economic cruelties that have bedevilled the little men, the forgotten men, if you like, since the black days of October 1929. The little men, the middle people, the keepers of shops, the hard-working, sober, substantial back-bone men and women who service, distribute, consume. These have not forgotten as quickly as the whining, panic-stricken crew of utility men and bankers and railroad officials who went wailing for help, down to Washington in the Spring of 1933. After the contemptible evasiveness of Hoover, the pitiable alibis, the fatal falterings of a one-time national hero, the Rooseveltian voice was sweet in the ears of these people. Do you remember the "Roosevelt Revolution?" Do you remember the May Days, the hey days of N. R. A. parades when men, women and children walked happily down city streets with the Blue Eagle spreading its victorious wings above them? Do you remember the Brain Trust? Remember how the plans came rolling out of Washington in mass production, one plan rubbing out the next, one plan contradicting its fellow?

NO BARRICADES, NO RED FLAGS

Then, of a sudden, the honeymoon was over. Groggy and glassy-eyed, the Fat Boys snapped out of their collective coma, looked from the windows and saw no barricades, no red flags on the avenue. For a perilous time, it had been a tight squeeze. But they had been saved. After all, this man Roosevelt's bark was worse than his bite. Hadn't he said, "The economic system in America is eternal?" Sure, the N. R. A. had given momentary aid and comfort to the miners, the textile workers, the clothing workers. But that could be fixed. Sound, right-thinking Democrats like John W. Davis and Newton D. Baker could easily get the Supreme Court to yank the eye-teeth out of the N. R. A. Anyhow it had its points, that N. R. A. A bad business this talk of collective bargaining, but then there was the part about letting up on the anti-monopoly laws and letting the big fellows fix prices that would squeeze out the little fellows. And did you see the wage rate they put in the cotton code? Twelve dollars in the South. Thirteen in the North. If that's the way it's going, what is there to be scared about?

But what about the little man, the middle people, the forgotten men and women and children? Were *they* saved? Not so you could notice it. True they didn't starve to death, but they went down to an economic hell in a far less dramatic fashion. They went to live with their busted kin folk. They eked out a shoddy and degrading existence by taking in one another's wash—and then they went on relief. They put up a good, bold front for a while, all the credit in the world for their courage, but courage is no security in a Fat Boy's bank. Still there are millions of them who think today that while they were staggering around in an unexpected thunder storm, Roosevelt came along with a sheltering umbrella and that if the Supreme Court chucked that umbrella out of the window, Roosevelt is not to blame. But aside from

a momentary pout, what has Roosevelt done to break the power of the Supreme Court?

John L. Lewis is right when he says that no other Administration in years has been as friendly to labor as this one. But what faint praise that is! Let Brother Lewis think back over some of the administrations with which he has had personal contact, those of Harding, Coolidge, Hoover. In comparison with these scab-herding, injunction-loving, labor sluggers Roosevelt looks like a delivering knight in shining armor.

But aside from gestures, from the gracious and faintly patronizing speeches of Madame Secretary of Labor, the paper recognition of the rights of labor to organize (this after 136 years of incessant struggle for organization), aside from fair sounding proclamations and the fact that some of labor's crudest exploiters have lined solidly against the President, what has labor to gain by supporting Roosevelt?

Strike after strike was broken by brazen and appalling methods of terrorism, often, as in San Francisco, with the connivance of Administration representatives; widespread violation of elementary civil liberties of the workers and not one word of protest from the White House; the official run-around of the Newspaper Guild and the auto workers; stark terrorism in Arkansas, the state represented for more than a quarter of a century by Senator Joe T. Robinson, Roosevelt's right-hand man in Congress. Above all, the widespread breakdown of those very attempts to enforce genuine collective bargaining on which the Administration must pride itself—little meat for a hungry worker in all this.

LABOR LEADERS' LUNCHES

In view of this anything but glorious record, it might well be expected of a labor leader plumping for Roosevelt that he demand for his rank and file some definite promise of tangible rewards in the event of Roosevelt's re-election. Lunches for labor leaders at the White House don't fill the stomachs of workers' kids, they provide no nourishment for their women folk, they do not satisfy the appetites of striking workers, they give no jobs to twelve million desperate workless workers.

But there are no tangible promises, no names on dotted lines, no evidences of a consistent, forward-moving policy. Where can the worker lay a calloused finger on a man, who in one and the same breath assures Big Business that its extortionate profits will be safeguarded by Government, the farmer that agricultural prices will be raised, and Labor that its wages will be shoved to high levels?

For the rank and file of the professional Democrats the name Roosevelt is a symbol all right. But it is a symbol of nothing more than a job. And in the long run it is precisely this nucleus of job-holders and vote-getters that must be counted on to deliver the goods this November. And it is this same combination of Southern Bourbons and Northern ward leaders who will sit in Congress and make the laws of the land. From them, little can be expected. Always they must be flattered, cajoled, reassured that no Administration project, no matter how drastic it may appear, will threaten their vested interests. And those interests are not the interests of the workers or the farmers. A life-long fighter for the people like Senator Norris may plead until he

is hoarse for the ending of Farleyism. In vain. Farleyism and what it connotes is of the very essence of the Roosevelt scheme.

Small wonder that the chart of The New Deal shows such startling zig-zags, now zooming to the right, now clinging to the center, now starting off timorously to the left, only to swing far over to the right again. Roosevelt is caught in the net of his own contradictions, forced by the brutal necessities of the old line political game to play that game according to rules laid down by the professionals. No matter how honorable his intentions, how generous his gestures, he cannot in the nature of things offer more to the workers than a tentative and undependable neutrality in the bitter struggles that are before them.

And the farmers? Here again we have the same breathless attempt to preserve the status quo as was evident in the approach to Big Business. Accepting the outworn philosophy of scarcity rather than abundance, the Administration set out deliberately to destroy fundamental food supplies at a time when twelve to thirteen million men and women were in dire want. The drought in the "Dust Bowl" simply wrote the tragic ending to this bizarre performance. Lacking the courage to question the right of the Supreme Court to pass on social legislation, the Administration attempted to keep alive the absurdities of A A A under the name of "soil conservation" only to discover at long last that the weather is no respecter of Democrats.

If you work the soil, or tend a machine, or mine the earth or in any other way create America's wealth, your concern with the fortunes of a political party is with the amount of peace, plenty and freedom that party can afford you and your family. You are not interested in maintaining the status of landlordism in the South, competitive capitalism in the East, political skullduggery all over the map. You are not interested in maintaining the largest peace-time war establishment ever set up in America, because you know that such an establishment is a sinister irritant making inevitably for war. Your interests lie in fields well apart from the bulk of the contents of the Democratic platform. No matter how attractive its label, it's the goods inside the package that count. No matter how fine sounding the name Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the outside, it's Farley and the hiccupping postmasters at Philadelphia, Robinson and terror in Arkansas, Governor McNutt of Indiana and his strike-breaking militia, Sholtz and murder in Tampa, Vincent Astor and his New York real estate that you take home when you pick the Democratic package.

CARRYING HIS OWN TRAY

Roosevelt is a symbol. Alfred Mossman Landon is a symbol. Alf. The local lad who made good. Why, mom, I was eating in the cafeteria with the boys from the office and he walked right over to our table carrying his own tray. And he bollered out, "Hi, there," just like he always does and we bollered back, "Hi, Alf," just like he wasn't Governor and running for President.

There is the picture of Alf in hip boots fishing trout out of a stocked stream in Colorado and the picture of Alf throwing snow-

balls at the photographers and the picture of Alf looking stern and statesmanlike as he stands uneasily before the microphone.

But where is the picture of Alf being discovered by William Randolph Hearst? Where is the picture of Roraback and Tom McCarter and Floyd Carlisle and the rest of the kilowatt klan when they got the good news from Ohio? Where are the pictures of the railroad presidents, the munition makers, the steel, rubber, automobile, motion picture, coal, aluminum, textile and clothing bosses making out their checks to the Republican campaign committee? Where are the pictures of the labor busting Vigilante "law and order" leagues, the Liberty League, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the National Manufacturers Association, the Steel Institute, the United States Chamber of Commerce and all the rich Republican parasites that befoul the fresh springs of American life? They are in no news-reels. That burbling Kiwanian cheer-leader, Republican national chairman John D. Hamilton sees to that. The build-up for Alf is that he is a second Coolidge (save the mark). Shrewd, commonsensical Alf. Son of the Sunflower Alf. Oh, Susanna!

Look to the convention from which there sprang full-armed with the panoply of Hearst, Alfred Mossman Landon, the Great Unknown. The delegates to the Republican convention knew nothing about the man for whom they were splitting their larynxes. Their man was the late Herbert Hoover, as they showed by their yowls of delight when that lack-lustre "haunt" was disinterred from his decent burial ground in California.

LANDON WAS TAILOR-MADE

But the boys had their orders. Of the handful of Republican office-holders who had survived the Roosevelt landslide, Alf, alone, had shown his qualifications for G. O. P. "leadership", namely an eloquent silence on all important issues of the day, an amenability to the orders of the high Republican command, an eager willingness to yes the business and financial dictators who move behind the scenes of every Republican campaign. Landon was tailor-made for the suit which the Republicans cut out for him.

But surely there is nothing novel nor notable in the Republican attempt at a come-back. No remote hint that at Cleveland a "new G. O. P. was born", as Mark Sullivan of the Herald Tribune, Bruce Barton, William Allen White, David Lawrence and the other Republican Kazoo players would have us believe. It's the old, old act wherein "the politicians take campaign contributions from the rich and votes from the poor, on the ground that they are going to protect one from the other." An act built up by the perennial threat on the part of Senator Borah of a "walkout", by the injection of Willie Hearst and the new faces of John Hamilton and the Kansas cheering section. Change of geography means no change of heart. The Republican heart is where the purse is and that is in the Eastern financial centers.

And no less absurd than the attempt of the Republicans to label their platform and candidate liberal is the attempt of the Democrats and Communists to label Landon Fascist. To be sure many of the most influential followers of the Sunflower would gleefully throw in their

lot with any Fascist movement in this country. But they are convinced that here and now in 1936, their ends can best be served by booting Roosevelt out of the White House and putting in his place their own symbol, the compliant Alf.

TUB-THUMPING MEDICINE MEN

For Fascism, American style, look to Lemke and that weird amalgam of tub-thumping Medicine Men that has gathered into Father Coughlin's Union Party. There you have it in all its grass-root naivete. William Lemke, obscure Congressman from the Dakotas, fallen among Coughlins, Gerald Smiths, the backwash of cane-brake terrorism left by the late Huey Long—the dead dictator, characterized by Lemke as "immortal."

The evil face of Fascism flits across the platform of the convention of the Townsendites. The delegates do not recognize it. Hypnotized by the lure of \$200 a month, the old folks cheer lustily whenever Gerald Smith comes to a perspiring climax. They cheer when the priest tells them Roosevelt is "a liar." They boo when Norman Thomas alone has the courage to stand up before them and give them straight from the shoulder truths about their pathetic delusions. But, like the delegates to the Republican and Democratic conventions, they are merely the window-dressing, the democratic front for the private plans of the inside politicians.

Whether or not, Lemke is indeed a Republican "entry", as Heywood Broun suggests, put into the race to make the Democratic running more difficult, it is certain that he is galloping down the Hitler highway. All the swastika signs are there, the reckless promises of economic impossibilities, the organization of 100,000 young Black Shirts into a "watchers' army," the sinister silence when it comes to matters of free speech, democratic measures, trade unionism. Well-beeled, arrogant, proud of ignorance, the forces of American Fascism are under way under the Union Party banners. Lemke is a symbol. So is the swastika.

BLOWN-IN-THE-BOTTLE AMERICAN

Presumably Earl Browder, the Communist candidate, is also a symbol. But just what he symbolizes, no one, not even Browder, can tell. Obedient to the mandate from the Third International that the American Communists drop their abortive tactics of raiding trade unions, libelling Socialists, and generally raising meaningless Hell, Browder now holds out his Grecian gifts to all and sundry, to the once unspeakable liberals, and laborites who have come out for Roosevelt, to followers of Father Divine, even, believe it or not, to the Townsendites. He runs from one group to another, assuring all hands that he is the genuine, blown-in-the-bottle American revolutionist. Only this year the revolution has been unfortunately postponed on account of wet grounds.

To be sure, says Browder in effect, I'm running for President, but don't take that too seriously. The big thing is to beat the Republicans, because Landon is a Fascist. So let's get together, form a united front, until the day after November 3rd next when the Communists and I will capture you and denounce your leaders to the world as the

traitors to the working class that they are. When this alluring prospect fails strangely to intrigue its intended victims, loud cries of pain issue from the offices of The Daily Worker. No wonder. It was a man-sized struggle to convince the rank and file of the Communists that they must now abandon all their revolutionary integrity and scramble aboard a capitalist band-wagon. But to do this and then to be ignominiously kicked off said band-wagon, ah, that is Hell indeed!

SYMBOL OF SOCIALIST INTEGRITY

Norman Thomas is a symbol.

He is a symbol of Socialist integrity. A symbol of hope for those workers on the farms, in factories and shops, in offices and wherever socially useful labor creates the wealth of America. And he is a symbol of hope for the desperate men and women, the twelve million condemned to the cruel onslaughts of continuing unemployment, enforced idleness that eats out the heart, that breaks the proudest of spirits. For them no amount of "made work", no doles from above can recompense their loss of self-respect, their ever-haunting sense of insecurity. For them, so long as this system men call capitalism continues, whether under Republican or Democratic auspices, there is tragically no way out.

Norman Thomas is not running for President on the Rooseveltian ground that he will be "all things to all men". He is not running to help defeat Landon, with an eye to some vague coalition in 1940. He is running for President because it is not in the man, it is not in his party to make any futile compromises with capitalism. He is pledged, his rank and file are pledged, to the abolition of private profit, rent and interest.

He is pledged, his rank and file are pledged, to the collective ownership and democratic control of the tools of production. To production for use, not profit.

He is pledged, his rank and file are pledged, to the bringing in of a social order, wherein no man exploits his fellow man, where government is in the hands of those who live by working rather than by owning. To cooperation rather than competition, to service rather than gain, to peace rather than war.

The world knows where Norman Thomas and the Socialists stand. The enemies of Socialism know it. The spectre of Socialism haunts the conference rooms of bankers and brokers. It stalks the gatherings of labor-sweating bosses and farm and city landlords. It makes uneasy the sleep of the employers of child labor, the makers of munitions and wars, the exploiters of our natural resources, the "robber barons" of the utilities, the railroads, the mines. Against Socialism, Roosevelt, Landon, Lemke meet on common ground. They want none of it. Socialism wants none of them.

They tell you, these enemies of Socialism, that Socialism is "un-American." American Socialism is as old as American capitalism. The moment goods began to be produced collectively, labor to be exploited, Socialism was born in America. It is as American as Gene Debs of Terre Haute, Harry Laidler of New York, Daniel Hoan and George A.

Nelson of Wisconsin, Norman Thomas of Ohio and yes Morris Hillquit and Victor Berger. The Socialist Party of America is thirty-six years old, but there were Socialists here when Americans first came off the land into the factories. The story of American Socialism is one of the most heartening chapters in the history of this country. It is the story of men struggling against desperate odds, of men holding aloft the flaming torch of reason in the black night of intolerance and greed. It is the story of ruthless persecutions, bravely faced, of the indomitable spirit of American workers, pioneering, sweating, suffering, always pushing forward the frontiers of truth, until today, in 1936, clear across the Continent the ideas and ideals of Socialism have thrust their roots deep down in the good American earth.

YOUNG MINDED — ON-MOVING

They tell you, these enemies of Socialism, that the Socialist Party lacks the personnel and experience necessary for governing, that it is merely a collection of disgruntled outsiders wanting to get in. Socialist Party members are a cross-section of American life. They are engineers, economists, teachers, students, librarians, clerical workers, doctors, lawyers, accountants, journalists, authors, artists, coal-miners, steel workers, rubber workers, garment workers, automotive workers, seamen, farmers, sharecroppers. They represent the pick of America's intellectuals and workers. They are the mentally alert, the class-conscious in every community who know what things are all about. They are the young-minded and on-moving. They know the way of government, national and international. The intensive study of politics and economics, capitalist and socialist, is their especial concern. They know the way of trade unionism. On the front line of every industrial conflict Socialists are fighting for labor. They know the way of cooperation. In the fast-growing cooperative movements of farmers and consumers, Socialists take important parts.

Socialists are not interested in real estate speculation, selling bonds, writing advertisements, playing old-party politics. Their interests are the interests of workers and farmers in so organizing the productive and distributive agencies of America that all who work will enjoy the fair rewards of what they create.

They tell you, these enemies of Socialism, that Socialism is a "dream". It is. The noblest dream that ever possessed mankind. It is a dream that is coming to magnificent reality in Russia, in the Scandinavian countries, in France and Spain. The dream for which men have gone gallantly to death in Austria, Germany, and Italy. The dream that is the dread of dictators everywhere, the driving dynamic of real democracy.

Here is America in 1936. And here is the issue that confronts every thoughtful voter. Whether to give the outworn and anguished body of capitalism another artificial stimulant, prolonging the suffering and despair of the millions who live under its black shadow, or to resolve to be done with this intolerable oppressor and help usher in the new day of Socialism, peace, plenty and freedom. Of such a day, of such a choice, Norman Thomas is the flaming symbol.

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\$25* Will allow us to print a special leaflet for particular occupation groups.



\$10* Will help toward buying ink, stationery, stamps, etc.

\$5 Will bring you "Socialist Call Campaigner" (weekly), 25 platforms, membership blanks, buttons, leaflets and stickers.



\$1 Will pledge your good faith and bring you campaign material.

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